

continuing until the end thereof, or until their successors are selected and have qualified.

(b) The term of office of the initial members and alternates shall begin as soon as possible after the effective date of this subpart. One-third of the initial industry members and alternates shall serve for a one-year term, one-third shall serve for a two-year term, and one-third shall serve for a three-year term. The initial, as well as all successive terms of office of the public member and alternate member shall be for three years.

(c) The consecutive terms of office for all members shall be limited to two three-year terms. There shall be no such limitation for alternate members.

§ 956.22 Nominations.

Nominations from which the Secretary may select the members of the committee and their respective alternates may be made in the following manner:

(a) The committee shall hold or cause to be held, within the production area and prior to April 1 of each year or by such other date as may be specified by the Secretary, one or more meetings of producers and handlers for the purpose of designating one nominee for each of the member and alternate member positions which are vacant or will be vacant at the end of the fiscal period;

(b) In arranging for such meetings the committee may, if it deems such desirable, cooperate with existing organizations and agencies;

(c) Nominations for committee members and alternate members shall be provided to the Secretary, in such manner and form as the Secretary may prescribe, not later than 30 days prior to the end of the fiscal period within which the current term of office expires;

(d) Only producers may participate in designating nominees for producer committee members and their alternates and only handlers may participate in designating nominees for handler committee members and their alternates;

(e) Each person who is both a handler and a producer may vote either as a handler or as a producer, but not both;

(f) Each person is entitled to cast only one vote on behalf of him or herself, his or her partners, agents, subsidiaries, affiliates and representatives, in designating nominees for committee members and alternates. An eligible producer's or handler's privilege of casting only one vote, as aforesaid, shall be construed to permit such voter to cast one vote for each producer member and alternate member position to be filled or each handler member and alternate member position to be filled, but not both.

(g) Every three years, at the first meeting following selection, the committee shall nominate the public member and alternate for a three-year term of office.

(h) The committee shall prescribe such additional qualifications, administrative rules and procedures for selection and voting for each candidate as it deems necessary and as the Secretary approves.

§ 956.23 Selection.

The Secretary shall select members and alternate members of the committee from the nominations made pursuant to § 956.22 or from other qualified persons.

§ 956.24 Qualification and acceptance.

Any person nominated to serve as a member or alternate member of the committee shall, prior to selection by the Secretary, qualify by filing a written background and acceptance statement indicating such person's willingness to serve in the position for which nominated.

§ 956.25 Alternates.

An alternate member of the committee shall act in the place and stead of the member for whom such person is an alternate, during such member's absence. In the event of the death, removal, resignation, or disqualification of a member, that member's alternate shall serve until a successor to such member has qualified and is selected.

§ 956.26 Vacancies.

To fill any vacancy occasioned by the failure of any person nominated as a member or as an alternate to qualify, or in the event of the death, removal,

resignation, or disqualification of a member or alternate, a successor for the unexpired term may be selected by the Secretary from nominations made pursuant to §956.22 from previously unselected nominees on the current nominee list, or from other eligible persons.

§956.27 Failure to nominate.

If nominations are not made within the time and manner prescribed in §956.22 the Secretary may, without regard to nominations, select the members and alternates on the basis of the representation provided for in §956.20.

§956.28 Procedure.

(a) Six members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, and six concurring votes shall be required to pass any motion or approve any committee action, except that recommendations made pursuant to §956.61 shall require seven concurring votes.

(b) The committee may provide for meetings by telephone, telegraph, facsimile, or other means of communication, and any vote cast orally at such meetings shall be confirmed promptly in writing; *Provided*, That if an assembled meeting is held, all votes shall be cast in person.

§956.29 Expenses.

Members and alternates shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for such expenses authorized by the committee and necessarily incurred by them in attending committee meetings and in the performance of their duties under this part.

§956.30 Powers.

The committee shall have the following powers:

- (a) To administer the provisions of this part in accordance with its terms;
- (b) To make rules and regulations to effectuate the terms and provisions of this part;
- (c) To receive, investigate, and report to the Secretary complaints of violations of the provisions of this part; and
- (d) To recommend to the Secretary amendments to this part.

§956.31 Duties.

It shall be among the duties of the committee:

(a) At the beginning of each fiscal period, or as soon thereafter as practicable, to meet and organize, to select a chairperson and such other officers as may be necessary, to select subcommittees, and to adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of its business as it may deem advisable;

(b) To act as intermediary between the Secretary and any producer or handler;

(c) To furnish to the Secretary such available information as the Secretary may request;

(d) To appoint such employees, agents, and representatives as it may deem necessary and to determine the salaries and define the duties of each such person;

(e) To investigate from time to time and to assemble data on the growing, harvesting, shipping, and marketing conditions with respect to Walla Walla Sweet Onions and to engage in such research and service activities which relate to the production, handling, or marketing of Walla Walla Sweet Onions as may be approved by the Secretary;

(f) To keep minutes, books, and records which clearly reflect all of the acts and transactions of the committee. Such minutes, books, and records shall be subject to examination at any time by the Secretary or the Secretary's authorized agent or representative;

(g) To make available to producers and handlers the committee voting record on recommended regulations and on other matters of policy;

(h) Prior to each fiscal period, to submit to the Secretary a budget of its proposed expenses for such fiscal period, together with a report thereon, and a recommendation as to the rate of assessment for such period;

(i) To cause its books to be audited by a competent accountant at least once each fiscal period, and at such other time as the committee may deem necessary or as the Secretary may require; the report of such audit shall show the receipt and expenditure of funds collected pursuant to this part; a